REMARKS

Preliminarily, claims 2, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 were canceled with the Amendment filed June 21, 2002. Therefore, the pending claims are claims 1, 3, 4, 8, 11 and 12.

Applicants again respectfully request the Examiner to acknowledge the claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document from the International Bureau.

Claim 8 has been amended to recite that the granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder contains a segmented polyalkylene glycol in an amount of 10 to 70 ppm and has an electrostatic charge not more than 10 V. Support is found, for example, at page 7, lines 10-12 of the specification. Claims 11 and 12 have been amended to conform to claim 8 from which they depend. Entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

Review and reconsideration on the merits are requested.

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,037,402 to Asano et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse for the following reasons.

Process claims 1, 3, and 4 and product claims 8, 11 and 12 are presented for examination.

The invention of claims 1, 3 and 4 is directed to a process for preparing a low-electrostatically-charging granular PTFE powder, which comprises contacting a nonionic surfactant having an electrostatic charging-preventing ability when substantially dry to a granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder, and then drying the granular powder without washing while retaining the nonionic surfactant. Furthermore, the nonionic surfactant is contacted in the form

of an aqueous solution at a concentration of not more than 0.05% by weight to the granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder.

The "granular" polytetrafluoroethylene powder as recited in claim 1 means a powder which has already been granulated. Therefore, in the present invention, the granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder is contacted with the nonionic surfactant after granulation. On the other hand, in Asano et al, a filler-containing polytetrafluoroethylene granular powder is prepared by granulating a mixture of polytetrafluoroethylene powder and a filler in water with stirring in the presence of a surfactant and an organic liquid. See, for example, the Abstract and claim 1 of Asano et al. Claim 1 of Asano et al is reproduced, below:

> 1. A process for preparing a filler-containing polytetrafluoroethylene granular powder...characterized in that the polytetrafluoroethylene powder and the filler are poured separately in water without being premixed, are mixed with stirring in the presence of a surfactant to give a slurry and then are granulated with stirring in the presence of an organic liquid...

Thus, the process of the present invention differs from that of Asano et al with respect to the time at which the surfactant is added to the granulation tank. For this reason alone, claims 1, 3 and 4 are not anticipated by Asano et al.

Additionally, process claims 1, 3 and 4 require contacting the nonionic surfactant in the form of an aqueous solution at a concentration of not more than 0.05% by weight to the granular PTFE powder. By contacting the nonionic surfactant with the granular PTFE powder, the electrostatic charge-preventing compound is stuck to the granular PTFE powder.

In Example 1 of Asano et al, 90 ml of 5% by weight of a nonionic surfactant was added to a granulation tank containing 1.275 kg of a PTFE powder. Therefore, in Example 1 of Asano et al, the nonionic surfactant was contacted in the form of an aqueous solution at a concentration

of roughly (90 ml)(0.05)/1275 g PTFE = 0.35% by weight to the granular PTFE powder outside the scope of present claim 1.

In Example 2 of Asano et al, 90 ml of 5% by weight of an aqueous solution of nonionic surfactant was added to a granulation tank charged with 1.5 liters of water and 1.35 kg of pulverized PTFE powder. Thus, in Example 2, the nonionic surfactant was contacted in the form of an aqueous solution at a concentration of roughly (90 ml)(0.05)/1350 g PTFE = 0.33% by weight to the granular PTFE powder outside the scope of claim 1. Examples 3 to 7 of Asano et al employed an ammonium salt of perfluorooctanoic acid as a surfactant (i.e., an anionic surfactant) outside the scope of claim 1.

Even though Asano et al describes that the amount of the surfactant is from 0.01 to 5% on the basis of the total amount of the PTFE powder and filler, none of the working examples of Asano et al are within the scope of present claim 1. For this additional reason, the process claims are not anticipated.

Product claims 8, 11 and 12 are directed to a granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder which contains a segmented polyalkylene glycol in an amount of 10 to 70 ppm and has an electrostatic charge of not more than 10 V.

Asano et al does not disclose the amount of the surfactant contained in the granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder and the electrostatic charge of the granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder. In addition, Asano et al does not disclose the segmented polyalkylene glycol.

For these reasons, product claims 8, 11 and 12 are not anticipated by Asano et al.

Claims 1-12 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-15 of U.S. Patent 6,037,402.

Applicants traverse, and rely on the response above with respect to the rejection of the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent 6,037,402 to Asano et al.

Withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of claims 1, 3, 4, 8, 11 and 12 is earnestly solicited.

In the event that the Examiner believes that it may be helpful to advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

Abraham J. Rosner
Registration No. 33,276

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860
WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373
PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: January 9, 2003

APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

8. (Twice amended) A granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder which contains a [nonionic surfactant] segmented polyalkylene glycol in an amount of 10 to 70 ppm and has an electrostatic charge of not more than 10 V.

11. (Amended) The [preparation process] granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder of Claim 8, wherein the granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder does not contain a filler.

12. (Amended) The [preparation process] granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder of Claim 8, wherein the granular polytetrafluoroethylene powder contains an electrically insulating filler.